



Through our Agency's Strong Private, Public and Not for Profit Partnerships,
"We are Building Strong Communities with an Exceptional Quality of Life."

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FINANCIAL AUDIT SERVICES

The Housing Authority of the City of Aiken (AHA) is inviting proposals from independent public accounting firms to perform an audit for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, with a two-year renewal option.

All services must be performed in compliance with applicable federal, state and local laws, the Code of Federal Regulations and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requirements. The audits must meet all HUD requirements as related to the annual IPA Audits. Auditors are required to perform the final review of the audit report within HUD's Real Estate Assessment Center (REAC).

The Authority reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, to waive any informality and to award the contract in the best interest of the Authority.

PROPOSALS WILL BE ACCEPTED UNTIL 6:00 PM (EDT), AUGUST 24, 2020

They should be addressed to:

**Chanosha Lawton, Chief Executive Officer
The Housing Authority of the City of Aiken
P. O. Box 889
Aiken, SC 29802**

If you have any questions concerning this request, please contact Chanosha Lawton at clawton@aikenhousing.org.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Housing Authority of the City of Aiken (AHA) was founded in 1940. AHA operates and maintains low income housing for citizens in Aiken County. The Authority is subsidized by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. The Authority determines applicant eligibility for housing assistance. In addition to providing low income housing, the authority aids citizens through a rent assistance program.

The Housing Authority of the City of Aiken has 257 conventional public housing units located in nine developments and 14 non-public housing units in one development. AHA currently owns two community building facilities and also administers 875 Housing Choice (Section 8) Vouchers. The Authority currently has 19 Employees.

The Housing Authority of the City of Aiken's fiscal year ends September 30.

The Housing Authority of the City of Aiken's annual operating budget is \$8,461,403.

Included in the operating budget are grant revenues from the Summer Food Service Program and the Capital Fund Program, in addition to the Low-Income Public Housing and Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) revenues.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Proposals must contain the following information as a minimum:

1. Qualifications of the firm
 - Information about the firm
 - Experience providing similar auditing and financial technical assistance services to other Public Housing Agencies (PHAs)
 - Experience with PHAs
2. Names, addresses and phone numbers of other PHAs where the firm has provided similar services
3. Qualifications of the persons who will actually be providing the services
 - PHA experience
 - Experience providing financial auditing services
 - Education, training and certifications
4. Approach to providing services to the Authority and the methodology that will be utilized
5. Capability for performing the Audits in a professional and timely manner
6. Work plan, costs and timetables for completing the Audits.
7. Hourly rates of the persons who will actually be performing the Audits.
8. Firm fixed fee costs for performing the Audits by fiscal year for the Housing Authority.
9. Certification regarding debarment or other prohibition from professional practice by any federal, state or local agency
10. Proof the firm has at least \$500,000 of General Liability and \$1,000,000 of Professional Liability insurance, including errors and omissions.
11. Proposed form of contract which the Authority may use as a guide in developing the final agreement between the firm and the Authority. The contracts must contain provisions that will enable the Authority to terminate the contract with thirty (30) days written notice.

EVALUATION OF AUDIT PROPOSALS

Evaluation Committee - Proposals received will be evaluated by an Evaluation Committee who will make a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners. The Evaluation Committee will use a two-step method.

Step 1.

Proposals must meet certain mandatory criteria in order to qualify for further evaluation. Any "no" answer to the first two questions will disqualify the proposal. A "yes" answer to the third question will require a written explanation, and may disqualify the proposal.

1. Is the firm licensed?
2. Is the firm independent with respect to AHA?
3. Have any federal or state disciplinary actions been taken or are any pending against the firm? If yes, please explain.

Step 2.

Proposals will be evaluated using the following technical criteria. Proposals should address each question:

1. Does the firm have a quality control program to help ensure adherence to high professional standards?
2. Does the firm subject itself to "Peer Review" in order to provide an independent review of its quality control policies and procedures?
3. Did the "Peer Review" cover the governmental auditing section and was the "Peer Review" opinion attached?
4. Does the proposal fully respond to the needs of AHA with regard to this audit?
5. Will the firm be able to meet AHA's deadline? Does the number of hours indicated by the firm to complete the audit and perform other related tasks to fully complete the audit engagement appear reasonable?
6. Is the quality of the firm's professional personnel to be assigned to the engagement and quality of the firm's management support personnel available for technical consultation adequate?

7. Has the firm audited other PHAs? If so, please list a representative sample and indicate if we may contact them.
8. Will the field personnel to be assigned to the engagement have previous experience auditing PHAs? How experienced and credentialed are the staff members that will be involved in the audit? Are the "in-charge" staff CPAs?
9. Does the proposal adequately describe in a clear, concise, and understandable manner the work to be performed including sampling techniques and analytical procedures to be used?
10. Does the proposal demonstrate the firm's familiarity with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) and HUD regulations?
11. Have the firm's prior experiences with HUD or any other Public Housing Authority, if any, been acceptable?

Proposals will be evaluated using the following ranking criteria:

Grading Criteria	Maximum Points
Experience of the proposer in all aspects of public housing, Section 8, non-profits, and HUD regulations	20
Experience of the proposer providing financial auditing services	20
Qualifications of proposer based on answers to Step 1 & Step 2	20
Time to compete the audits	15
Costs	10
Availability for follow-up calls and support	15

Proposers will not be considered if they do not submit a non-debarment certification or proof of insurance or if they are debarred or if they do not have the required insurance coverage.

The proposer's hourly rates will be considered in addition to the above ranking criteria in determining the most advantageous proposal for the Authority.

The Authority will begin negotiations with the highest ranked proposer first. If an agreement cannot be reached with the number one ranked proposer, the Authority will negotiate with the number two ranked proposer, etc.

PROPOSAL FORMAT AND REQUIREMENTS

In order to secure information in a format which will ensure that your proposal will be properly evaluated, you are asked to submit your proposal in the format listed below. Standard proposal formats are acceptable provided the following information is included:

- Title page should include the proposal subject, the firm's name, address, phone and fax numbers, email address, and contact person, date of the proposal, Federal ID number of the firm and firm's license number with the State Board of Accountancy.
- Table of Contents with page numbers.
- A transmittal letter briefly stating the understanding of the work to be done, the commitment to perform the work within the time frame, a statement why the firm believes it to be the best qualified to perform the engagement and that the proposal is an irrevocable offer for a stated period of time (minimum 60 days).
- Information about the firm. Is the firm local, national or regional? Identify the personnel from the office who will serve AHA. Does the firm meet all CPA licensing and continuing education requirements? Is the firm independent with respect to AHA? Provide the results of the firm's last peer review. A copy of the opinion and State Society's acceptance of the review should be included.
- Provide prior experience in auditing Housing Authorities and local governments from the audit team. Provide references of at least four Housing Authorities or local government (with phone numbers and contact persons). The clients listed should be those served by members of the proposed audit team who will be serving AHA.
- Provide information as to the approach, timing and work program of the engagement team.
- Briefly discuss your audit approach as to consideration of laws and regulations.
- A proposed work plan and time schedule addressing the scope of work.
- A section detailing the cost for the work including cost estimates for out-of-pocket expenses and a proposed payment schedule based on the work plan.
- A section identifying the staff that would be assigned to the project including their background and experience.
- Please indicate the total estimated hours required by classification by the partner, manager, senior and staff.

- Provide maximum fees (including all out of pocket expense) for the initial year and the two-year option period broken down in adequate detail so as to evaluate fee response.
- Outline the level of support your firm will require of the AHA staff.

WITHDRAWAL OF RFP

Proposals may be withdrawn before the RFP submittal deadline by submitting a written request to the Contact Person. Re-submittal before the RFP submittal deadline can be made; however, they may not be re-submitted after the deadline.

RFP COSTS

All costs incurred in the preparation and presentation of the RFP shall be completely absorbed by the responding party to the RFP. All documents submitted as part of the RFP will become property of the AHA. Requests for specific material to be returned will be considered. Any material submitted that is confidential must be clearly marked as such.

COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS

The selected firm agrees to be bound by applicable Federal, State and Local laws, regulations and directives as they pertain to the performance of the audit contract.

AWARD BASIS

At the option of AHA, finalists may be selected for a final round of negotiations; however, vendors are encouraged to present their best offers with their initial submission.

AHA reserves the right to accept or reject any and all proposals, to waive any irregularities in any proposal process, and to make an award of contract in any manner in which AHA, acting in the sole and exclusive exercise of its discretion, deems to be in AHA's best interest. The award of the contract will not necessarily be made to the firm offering the lowest price.

CONTRACTUAL DEVELOPMENT

If a proposal is accepted, AHA intends to enter into a contractual agreement with the selected bidder. Contract discussion and negotiation will follow the award selection. Bidders must be amenable to inclusion, in a contract, of any information provided whether herein or in response to this RFP, or developed subsequently during the selection process.

OTHER TERMS AND CONDITIONS

WORK PRODUCT

All work papers prepared in connection with the contracted services will remain the property of the successful bidder. The work papers must be retained for a period of five years and be made available to AHA upon request.

All reports rendered to AHA are their exclusive property and subject to their use and control.

INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR

The successful bidder and its agents, officers and employees shall act at all times in an independent capacity during the entire agreement and in the performance of the services to

be rendered, and shall not act as, and shall not be, and shall not in any manner be considered to be agents, officers or employees.

ASSIGNMENT

Neither the agreement, nor any part thereof, shall be assigned by the successful bidder without the prior written consent of AHA.

CONTRACT TERMS

CONTRACT DURATION: You are invited to submit a proposal for audit services for an initial one-year period with an option to renew for an additional two years.

AHA may terminate the audit contract upon written notice to the Contractor not less than sixty (60) days before the close of the fiscal year to be audited.

AHA reserves the right to cancel the agreement if it is determined that the selected firm is not performing satisfactorily or is adversely affecting performance of AHA's activities. AHA will provide thirty (30) days written notice of termination.

AHA also reserves the right to request changes in the selected firm's representation if, at our discretion, assigned personnel are not satisfying the needs of AHA.

PAYMENT TERMS

AHA will make progress payments of the compensation for services, as included in the accepted proposal.

INFRINGEMENT AND INDEMNIFICATION

The firm awarded this contract agrees to protect, defend and hold harmless AHA against any demand for payment for use of any patented materials, process, article, or device that it may enter into during the rendering of the necessary services. Furthermore, the selected firm agrees to indemnify and hold harmless AHA, their Board of Commissioners and employees from suits or actions of every nature and description arising out of, or in connection with, the performance of this contract, or on account of any injuries or damages received or sustained by a party or parties by or from any act of the selected firm, or its agents.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

AHA emphasizes that all respondents will receive full consideration without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age or sexual orientation.

LIMITATIONS

AHA reserves the right to reject any and all Proposals and to waive any informality in the solicitation process.

BIDDER'S QUESTIONS

Any technical questions concerning the request for proposal should be emailed and titled "RFP BIDDERS'S QUESTIONS" to all below recipients:

Chanosha Lawton, Chief Executive Officer: clawton@aikenhousing.org

Daphne Hudson, Director of Finance: dhudson@aikenhousing.org

LaToya Johnson, Staff Accountant: ljohnson@aikenhousing.org

Such questions must be received by the date and time stipulated in the calendar of events. If necessary, written responses to the technical questions will be provided to all firms holding RFPs no later than Monday, August 10, 2020.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Listed below are the important actions and dates/times by which the actions must be taken or completed. If AHA finds it necessary to change any of these dates, it will be done by addendum.

August 3, 2020	Issue Date
August 10, 2020	6:00 PM EDT Deadline for technical questions from proposer(s) regarding RFP to be submitted to AHA
August 13, 2020	6:00 PM EDT AHA final responses to technical questions submitted to proposer(s)
August 24, 2020	6:00 PM EDT proposal submission deadline
August 31, 2020	Notification of Award



Through our Agency's Strong Private, Public and Not for Profit Partnerships,
"We are Building Strong Communities with an Exceptional Quality of Life."

FORM OF NON-COLLUSIVE AFFIDAVIT

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

COUNTY OF AIKEN

_____, being first duly sworn, deposes and says that he/she is

(a partner or officer of the firm of, etc.)

the party making the foregoing proposal or bid, that such proposal or bid is genuine and not collusive or sham; that said bidder has not colluded, conspired, connived or agreed, directly or indirectly, in any manner, directly or indirectly, sought by agreement or collusion, or communication or conference with any person to fix the bid price of affiant or of any other bidder, or to fix any overhead, profit, or cost element of said bid price, or of that of any other bidder, or to secure any advantage against

THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF AIKEN

or any person interested in the proposed Contract; and that all statements in said proposal or bid are true.

Signature of Bidder, if Bidder is an Individual

Signature of Partner, if Bidder is a Partnership

Signature of Officer, if Bidder is a Corporation

Subscribed and sworn to before me this ___ day of _____, 2020

Notary Public

My Commission expires _____

Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form

Note: A potential or actual conflict of interest exists when commitments and obligations are likely to be compromised by the nominator(s)' other material interests, or relationships (especially economic), particularly if those interests or commitments are not disclosed.

This Conflict of Interest Form should indicate whether the nominator(s) has an economic interest in, or acts as an officer or a director of, any outside entity whose financial interests would reasonably appear to be affected. The nominator(s) should also disclose any personal, business, or volunteer affiliations that may give rise to a real or apparent conflict of interest. Relevant Federally and organizationally established regulations and guidelines in financial conflicts must be abided by.

Individuals with a conflict of interest should refrain from submitting a proposal.

Date: _____ Name: _____ Position: _____

Please describe below any relationships, transactions, positions you hold (volunteer or otherwise), or circumstances that you believe could contribute to a conflict of interest:

_____ I have no conflict of interest to report.

_____ I have the following conflict of interest to report. Please specify other nonprofit and for-profit boards you (and your spouse) sit on, any for-profit businesses for which you or an immediate family member are an officer or director, or a majority shareholder, and the name of your employer and any businesses you or a family member own:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

I hereby certify that the information set forth above is true and complete to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: _____

Date: _____